

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 6, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: T. Dwyer and H. Waugh, Pantex Site Representatives

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending March 6, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: Timothy Dwyer was on site Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, and at DOE-AL Wednesday-Thursday. Harry Waugh was on site all week, except Wednesday. Charles Martin and Dan Burnfield were on site all week for the W79 Dismantlement NESS.

Pit Issues: DOE-AL (Whiteman, Sena) presented an Integrated Pit Storage Program Plan (IPSP) briefing to DP-20 (Ives) on Thursday. During the course of the briefing, DP-20 expressed an interest in having a single point of contact to implement the Plan on the DOE-AL staff, but was told that operational control was split between two individuals. However, both individuals report to Mr. Whiteman, who agreed that he could act as the focal point for any DP-20 questions. DOE-AL indicated that a presentation will be made to DP-20 during the week of March 23rd regarding final selection of an AL-R8 Sealed Insert design, including subsequent determination of necessary resources/funding for FY-98/99. DOE-AL did not have a satisfactory answer concerning how such a determination could be made in the absence of an approved IPSP, or even a rudimentary analysis of how many/what types of pits would require Sealed Inserts versus AT-400As. DOE-AL indicated that an IPSP revision may be out in early April.

Lightning Issues: As promised in the February 20th letter from DP-20 to the Board, DOE convened a meeting regarding lightning protection at DOE-AL on Wednesday. Based on the presentations and subsequent discussions, DOE will be developing a formal schedule with milestones and deliverables intended to supersede the path forward outlined in the DP-20 letter. These details will be provided in follow-on correspondence with the Board.

W79 Dismantlement Program: The W79 Dismantlement Program NESS continued this week, concentrating on bay operations. The NESSG continued their good performance. They observed bay operations on Tuesday through Thursday -- in general, these operations were well run. The NESSG correctly identified numerous potential safety issues related to the W-79 disassembly. Where issues were identified, AAO or MHC personnel were assigned responsibility to respond and to resolve the issue. However, one potential issue that the NESSG did not identify involves physical stability of the W79 rocket motor after it is removed and placed on the work table. In this configuration, it is possible that inadvertent contact could tip the motor over, resulting in a fall to the floor and potential ignition, which would be a hazard both to personnel and to the nuclear explosive still present in the bay.

Dynamic Balancer: The existing authorization basis does not permit Dynamic Balancer operations after March 31st. DOE, M&H, and the Design Agencies are struggling to complete analyses of fire and overspeed/rapid deceleration, as required by the previously approved path forward. (See Board Letter to DP-1 dated October 15, 1997.) Controls associated with fire scenarios have proven particularly problematic, and a Basis for Interim Operations (BIO) change to address them, as well as capture POI fixture and independent faceplate speed measurement issues, is still being developed. DP-20 agreed to an aggressive schedule intended to allow approval of the necessary BIO change prior to expiration of the existing authorization basis.

**Attachment
Upcoming Pantex Events:**

Now-March 27 -- W79 NESS [in progress]

March 9-13 -- W56 Project Team walkthroughs

March 9-13 -- W84 Safety Evaluation (SE)

March 9-20 -- Building 12-116 Management Self-Assessment (MSA)

March 11-12 -- AT-400A Imaging/UT Management/Technical Review (@ DOE-AL)

March 13 -- W76 HATT walkthroughs complete

March 20 -- B61-11 NESE SIID validation [adequacy review]

March 24 -- Second W87 ASSET Program Senior Management Team Review

March 24-25 -- B83 Provisioning and Program Review

March 25 -- Major Sitewide Emergency Exercise

March 30-April 9 -- Building 12-116 Contractor ORR

March 31 -- Final W87 ASSET Senior Management Team Review

April 7-17 -- B61-11 NESE

April 7-8 -- NMO Quarterly Meeting/Quarterly Production Meeting**

April 13-16 -- W56 SIRR**

April 20 -- W79 FDU

April 20 -- W76 SIRR commences

April 20-May 1 -- Building 12-116 DOE ORR

April 28-May 1 -- NES Electrical Tester Master Study SIID validation [adequacy review]

May 1 -- Building 12-116 startup

May 4-8 -- JOWOG [possibly including lightning workshop]**

May 5-8 -- W56 NESS SIID validation [adequacy review]

May 18-June 14 -- NES Electrical Tester Master Study

June 2-July 10 -- W56 NESS

June 9 -- W76 HAR and ABCD complete

June 9-19 -- W62 NES Revalidation

NOTES: ** highlights events which are new listings or for which schedule has changed